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Mr W Guymer
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Guymer

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Design and Technology

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 25 January 2007 to look at work in D&T.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions, but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils work and observation of lessons.

Overall Judgement

The overall effectiveness of D&T was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

- The school rightly evaluates achievement in design and technology to be good and improving. Standards are above average and capability to design and make products is well developed by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils are particularly successful at modelling ideas and producing innovative designs based on real contexts such as designing vehicles following a liaison visit by a local police officer. The school knows applying electronic, information and control technology systems is less well developed and is taking action to make improvements.

- Design and technology is making a very good contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils concentrate for long periods of time when working on projects, are very well behaved during practical work and encouraged to work safely.

Quality of teaching and learning of D&T

- The school's view that the subject is well coordinated was confirmed by the consistently good D&T teaching and learning seen in all classes. The teaching encourages creative approaches to design work very effectively although pupils' knowledge of tools, techniques, systems and control is less well embedded.
- Assessment systems are in place and the school is planning to improve them by assessing individual performance against national curriculum levels. This will help pupils to know more fully how well they are doing in the subject and guide learning more effectively.

Quality of curriculum

- The D&T curriculum is well planned. Progress from year to year has improved as a result of using QCA units to guide the work.
- The use of appropriate contexts drawn from reading materials such as 'Mary Poppins' and 'Bill Bear' promotes creativity and, as a result, pupils find the subject relevant and exciting. They enjoy the responsibility of planning their own work and using their imagination.

Leadership and management of Design and Technology

- Design and technology is thriving in the school because the leadership and management capacity to ensure the subject grows and develops is very good.
- There is a strong drive to improve provision and a clear view on what needs to be done to raise achievement. The school knows the strengths and areas for development well.

Inclusion

All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities are equally involved in D&T. There is no apparent difference in the performance of boys and girls. Staff work hard to guide and support pupils who frequently work together and are assessed in small groups on a project.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- making sure subject knowledge is fully embedded
- sharpening assessment practice by ensuring all pupils individually know their national curriculum level.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop D&T in the school. A copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Paul Hancock
Her Majesty's Inspector